

12.02½ hrs.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I have a statement to be made by the hon. Minister of Food. Shall I do it first before the Zero Hour?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : No... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : It is a long statement.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : It is important. We will allow Zero Hour. Do not worry. I have decided to allow Zero Hour. This is an important statement. The hon. Minister will make the statement now.

12.03 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Rise in the prices of wheat

[Translation]

MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : Mr. Speaker, Some of the Hon'ble Members of Parliament have been drawing the attention of Govt. towards the shortage of wheat and rise in its prices for the last few days. I am grateful that they have discussed this vital issue. As the United Front Govt. believes in transparency, I want to give a statement in the House so that position could be clarified in this regard.

In the first instance, let us have a look on production of wheat during Rabi season 1995-96. During the kharif season 95-96 for which procurement commenced in April 1996, the production of wheat was 622 lakh tonnes which is 31 lakh tonnes less than the last year's production which was about 653 lakh tonnes during 94-95 season. The procurement made by Govt. procuring agencies was the worst affected. The procurement during the year 95-96 was 123 lakh tonnes. This came down to 82 lakh tonnes in 1996-97 year i.e. procurement was less by 41 lakh tonnes... (Interruptions) I have read you proceedings... (Interruptions) Joshiji, your proceedings are with me, please listen. We are coming to your point... (Interruptions). You do not want to listen.

12.05 hrs.

(Shri P.M. Sayeed in the Chair)

Sufficient allotment is being made for social welfare projects of Govt like PDS and mid-day meal scheme despite less production and procurement. In addition, the export of wheat has been stopped so that availability of wheat could be ensured. 4.17 lakh tonnes of wheat was lifted under PDS during October 95 against the 7.32 lakh tonnes lifted during October 96 which shows an increase of 76%.

The off-take under the social welfare schemes has also increased. The geographical area for mid-day meal scheme has been increased. The other projects like JRY and Nutrition Programme are also continued. The off-take under these projects is 75-80 thousand tonnes per month. It may be seen from the aforesaid figures that the off-take for PDS has not been reduced. As far as possible the allotment on demand of States has also been increased. I would like to say clearly that we will not show any reluctance towards providing wheat from Central Pool for PDS and Govt. sponsored social welfare schemes.

The open sale of wheat was also started through FCI w.e.f. October 1993. There was problem of storage due to huge quantity of wheat in the godowns. The FCI had to bear the burden of carrying cost as the quantity of wheat was more than requirements. Due to this, approximately 5 lakh tonnes of wheat per month on an average has been sold in open market during 1995-96. The quantity of wheat sold in open market by FCI from April 95 to March 96 was 63 lakh tonnes.

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota) : Sir, there has been a standel in the open market... (Interruptions) Rs. 700 and a half crore has been plundered... (Interruptions)

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : I am not going to leave your point... (Interruptions) your reply is coming... (Interruptions) First, you listen... (Interruptions) The quantity of open sale reached even upto the level of 10.5 lakh tonnes in some months during the lean period last year. As a result of this the prices of wheat remained stable during the last year. Because of shortfall in production by 31 lakh tonnes and procurement by 41 lakh tonnes FCI reduced the quantity for sale in the open market. In view of availability of wheat in Central Pool we ordered to sell 3-4 lakh tonnes of wheat per month during the period August to October 1996. In view of scarcity of wheat I increased it to 6 lakh tonnes last week i.e FCI would be able to sell 6 lakh tonnes of wheat per month for the period of December 1996 to March 1997. This limit can be increased if considered necessary.

We have not only increased the quantity to be released in the open market but certain fundamental changes have also been made in the system of allotment so that hoarding and blackmarketing could be contained... (Interruptions) Please listen what steps have been taken Under the previous policy of FCI any Roller flour mill or person could purchase any quantity of wheat from open market sale. By recognising the shortcomings in this policy and the possibilities of misuse of it by hoarders and black marketers in the event of scarcity of wheat, I seriously thought over it and changed it completely. Today, under the changed policy, a flour mill or a person is allowed to purchase the wheat upto the ceiling of 200 tonnes... (Interruptions) As per new instructions, with the object to bring transparency in the open sale of wheat conducted by FCI, now this whole process is carried out under the surveillance of three member committee in which Director, Food of the

concerned State is also a member. The applications from the purchase of wheat are accepted every month upto 7th under the new process and on completion of scrutiny of these applications by three member committee, the list of allottees is displayed in the FCI HQrs...*(Interruptions)* This process never had such transparency in the past.

Today keeping in view the sentiments of the House and in order to control rise in prices, I have decided to raise the ceiling from 200 MT to 500 MT per month. Simultaneously, it has also been decided that under this system priority has to be given not only to the Undertakings of State Governments and cooperative societies, but they should also not be charged earnest money. Others will have to pay 10% as advance payment.

KUMARI UMA BHARATI (Khajuraho) : Mr. Chairman he is using wrong language...

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : I have also decided to make three members committee of FCI responsible for increase in the wheat production...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Mr. Chairman, Please ask the Minister about the prevailing prices in the market...*(Interruptions)* People are not getting food and you are producing lengthy figures here.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not disturb him. You may not agree with him but please hear him.

[Translation]

JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA (Pali) : Please tell at what price it is available...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : I will tell every thing. You are not prepared to listen...*(Interruptions)* Besides, I have also passed orders that wheat will be released to allottees only after obtaining an undertaking to the effect that the prices of wheat products would be kept under control. Even after taking these measures if Hon'ble Members come across irregularities committed by the officers of my Department, then they are requested to bring it to my knowledge immediately so that severe action could be taken against guilty officers...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Madhya Pradesh Government have resorted to firing in Sagar...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : After increasing the quantity in open market and allotment to States under PDS, stocks in the Central Pool as on 1.4.97 will come down to a level below buffer stock norms. In the wide public interest and with a view to increase the availability of wheat, I have given orders to relax the buffer norms...*(Interruptions)* In any case, buffer stock is maintained to meet such eventuality.

AN. HON'BLE MEMBER : You are speaking on behalf of the Government or in your personnel capacity...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : I do agree that price of wheat, particularly during 10-11 months, have increased in the market. In October, 1995 the wholesale price index of wheat was 268.5 which increased to about 332.2 in October, 1996...*(Interruptions)* In other words, there was a increase of 25%. During the same period, there was an increase of about 10.3% in the wholesale price index of rice.

Now, let us have a look on the price increase of last 3-4 years. There has been an increase of 41.9 per cent in the prices of wheat during January 1993 to October 1996 whereas the increase was 42.5 per cent in case of rice. Therefore, if we take into account the increase of last four years, it can be concluded that increase in prices of both wheat and rice was almost same.

Inspite of release of wheat from Central Pool, there is increase in prices of wheat in market or there is a scarcity, we would have to find the reasons elsewhere. It came to my notice that there are irregularities in the stock supplied to States under PDS at subsidised rates and such commodities are not made available to the Ration-card holders. After formation of U.F. Government I had written to all C.Ms and Governors to make sincere efforts to stop blackmarketing and hoarding. So many States responded...*(Interruptions)* I had made it clear that 'Essential Commodities Act' and 'Consumer Protection Act' may be enforced widely...*(Interruptions)* If there seems to be a need to amend any rules framed thereunder suggestions may be sent immediately. If ration is not available in the ration shops or there is diversion then State Government would have to initiate appropriate action. I had emphasised this is the Seminar of CMs and Ministers and requested them to have intensive study on P.D.S. carried out...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please allow him to make a Statement. Please hear him.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : In September, 1994, States were directed to relax the control on distribution and stocks of wheat in view of the adequate stock of wheat available in the Central Pool. The direction of September, 1994 has now been withdrawn in view of the changed scenario...*(Interruptions)* I have requested them to review the position statewide and take appropriate action...*(Interruptions)* I hope State Govts. will fix the wheat stock holding limits and take action against black marketing and profiteering.

There is some misunderstanding that the stock level of wheat has come down due to heavy export. I would like to clarify that 4 lakh 31 thousand tonnes of wheat has been sold by FCI for the purpose of export during the current financial year 1996-97 but no sale has been made by FCI for the purpose of export after June 96.

This wheat was sold to honour the commitment of last financial year 1995-96.

FCI might have had to pay compensation for non-compliance of the commitment regarding sale of wheat for the purpose of export. No new agreements have been signed by us to export wheat from Central Pool during the year 1996-97. Not only this, there was no restriction on the export of wheat products during the previous financial year 1995-96 and first six months of the current financial year. Govt. have included the export of wheat products in the "Restricted list" in view of the shortages of wheat.

We have rationalised the open market sale by FCI by raising the sale price of wheat...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI LALMUNI CHAUBEY (Buxar) : Mr. Chairman, I am on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is your point of order?

[English]

Hon'ble Minister, you may please resume your seat.

[Translation]

SHRI LALMUNI CHAUBEY : From the very beginning the hon. Minister has been saying that I have done this. Whether he is saying this on behalf of the Government or in his personnel capacity.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : What ever I am saying, saying in the capacity of a Minister and on behalf of the Government. In Punjab and Haryana, the sale price of wheat has been raised from Rs. 415 to Rs. 441 per qtl. w.e.f. 1st April, 1996. Again it was raised to Rs. 455/- per qtl. in August, 1996 and further to Rs. 490/- per qtl. w.e.f. 1st September, 1996. For the other parts of the country, sale price was fixed after the sale price in other parts of the country was fixed by adding freight charges in the basic price. Due to this the sale price of wheat increased and it was available for Rs. 490 to Rs. 572 per quintal. The open sale price in different places fixed time to time by us ...*(Interruptions)* if need be then we will decide to increase it further. We will exempt subsidy from it ...*(Interruptions)* The aim behind making it available for open sale at export price is to lower the market price ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN (SHRI P.M. SAYEED) : You may please confine yourself to the statement, Mr. Minister.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : Hon. members have made a special mention about unavailability of wheat in the capital of the country...*(Interruptions)* We have been supplying 60 thousand tons of wheat and 20 thousand tons of rice every month. The detail of allotment and lifting of wheat by Delhi during last few months is

shown below :

	Allotment	Lifting
July, 1996	60,000 tons	41,800 tons
August, 1996	60,000 tons	44,900 tons
September, 1996	60,000 tons	47,800 tons
October, 1996	60,000 tons	40,800 tons

Besides, Food Corporation of India had also released wheat quota for free sale in National Capital Region, Delhi, the details of which is shown below :

August, 1996	12000 Metric tons
September, 1996	10,000 Metric tons
October, 1996	15,000 Metric tons
November, 1996	20,000 Metric tons

The Central Government has taken initiatives for NCR Delhi. In order to control the rates of wheat in Delhi, Agmark wheat flour at the rate of Rs. 6.40 per Kg. is being sold through 150 branches of Super Bazar and 72 branches of Kendriya Bhandar...*(Interruptions)* The Government has made this arrangement from 9th December. It is also proposed to provide wheat at this rate to J.J. colonies and distant rural areas through 39 mobile vans of these two organisations. The price of wheat flour has come into effect from 9th December and an advertisement to this effect has been published in the newspapers. We will supply wheat in sufficient quantities to Super Bazars, Kendriya Bhandars and State Governments under this scheme.

The Central Government has advised all State Governments to implement this scheme. The States which show their willingness to sell wheat flour at fair price through their cooperatives or other organisations, we will make them available wheat from FCI at open market rates. I hope that the state Governments will take full benefits of this scheme.

Our intention is clear. We will firmly face the crisis, arising due to the shortage of wheat production. The interests of weaker sections are upper most in our mind therefore whatever quantity of wheat is required, we will give it to the states so that they may distribute it through PDS to everybody.

I would like that Roller flour mills, flour mill owners, wholesalers and retailers to cooperate Government in this regard so that unreasonable increase in the prices could be checked. I believe that they will not give a chance to the Government to use powers vested in various acts. In this context, I would like to submit that the day^since I have become the Minister for Food ...*(Interruptions)* the corruption...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Minister, you please confine to your statement.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : You do not want to listen to me. In this context, we are also keeping a strict vigil in the matter of corruption. The United Front Government will not compromise with corruption at any cost...(Interruptions) So far, three big cases of corruption have come into light. Now I am apprising you the action taken by me in this regard. After taking the charge, I have entrusted two cases to CBI for further investigation. There are two cases pertaining to Punjab and Haryana...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Minister, kindly resume your seat. Please sit down.

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE (Lucknow) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Minister is giving a statement. Should we take it for granted that Mr. Speaker as well as you have already gone through this statement. What should be the length of a statement? If the length of the statement is more than the required one then it could have been laid on the table of the House, there was no need to read it out. You can see for yourself that members are very agitated...(Interruptions) I request you to instruct the hon. Minister to lay the statement on the table of the House instead of reading it out and a discussion on the hike in the price of wheat should be started as it is being sold at Rs. 10 per Kg. and there were some firing incidents also...(Interruptions) Kindly ask him to lay it on the table of the House...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : How many pages are left now?

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : Sir, I will hardly take one and half minutes time to conclude...(Interruptions)

SHRI VIJAY GOEL (Sadar-Delhi) : Hon. Minister, wheat is being sold at Rs. 10-15 per Kg.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : You complete it now. Please confine to your statement. Please do not react to that side. You please read your statement.

[Translation]

SHRI VIJAY GOEL : If the Minister gives any statement cannot we make comment on that.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have entrusted two cases to CBI for investigation. I do not want to furnish any details about these cases as the matter is under investigation. The guilty officials will be punished after the investigation, I can assure

you this much. I believe in sifting of truth from the false...(Interruptions)

Hon. Shri Joshi ji has drawn the attention of the House towards the alleged irregularities in the open sale of wheat by FCI in Rajasthan. He has also written a letter in this regard. There has been some delay in the investigations but I hope to get the investigation report in a day or two. I am not interested in concealing the facts. I will apprise the members about the action taken on the investigation report within a week's period...(Interruptions) Just listen to me.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Again, you are reacting to that side.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : There was no acute scarcity of wheat but the blackmarketeers and hoarders were trying to create artificial scarcity of wheat in the market. I would like to warn them. One's will power help one to remove all handles. We are here to control the prices. I would like to reiterate my resolution with this couplet.

"Jo Hamare Dil ke Dard ko Pehchante Nahin"
Ham Unke Tafsaro ka Bura Mante Nahin."

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : Mr. Chairman, Sir, as per rules, there has not been a tradition of asking clarifications over a statement in this House but today such is the occasion that we will have to forget that tradition...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let me hear him. Why are you giving judgement on that?

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : It seems to me that neither you nor the hon. Speaker has gone through the statement earlier. Such a lengthy statement should not be allowed. It could have been laid on the table of the House and its copies could have been distributed to the members. In case if members wanted any clarification or discussion, arrangements could have been made for the same. Even though, allowing such a lengthy statement in the House means that the problem is very serious. Wheat is not available in many parts of the country and wherever it is available it is being sold at Rs. 10 per Kg. One of our colleagues from Madhya Pradesh was rightly saying that there was some firing incident when people were trying to get wheat. I had requested you to hold a short duration discussion on this subject so that the members could present the problems of their areas in the House. The scheduled business of the House is important but if wheat is not

available in the market and wherever it is available then it is beyond the reach of the common man then there cannot be a bigger issue than this. I therefore request you to urgently hold a discussion on this issue in the House...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly) : Sir, there should be a discussion not only about the situation of wheat, but there should be a full-fledged discussion on the overall food situation in the country...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI (Allahabad) : There is no question of agriculture but it has become an important issue since rates of pulses and rice are increasing...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Dr. Joshi, I have allowed Shri Pilot to speak.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJESH PILOT (Dausa) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, if the House remembers, this question was raised last week and the statement given by the Minister should have been come a few days ago when the price of wheat was soaring high. The other day I had said that until the Government do not claim that there is no scarcity of wheat the prices would continue to soar. Just now, what is said by Shri Atal ji is true that in small towns where there is scarcity of wheat, its price is roaring. Today the hon. Minister did not mention even once that the price of wheat will not be allowed to rise and there is no scarcity of wheat and he will provide whatever quantity of wheat is required. He only mentioned one thing in his statement that there was some fall in the wheat production as well as its procurement. In 1996, when our Government handed over charge to this Government at that time we had sufficient buffer stock of wheat the Minister may give a clarification in this regard. When in May, I went to Punjab I found that there was no godown capacity left with FCI there. They were not purchasing wheat due to which the farmers were making hue and cry.

I have to make two submissions. This is the concern of the nation as a whole because whenever we go on tours then we are asked about the price of wheats in every public meeting. I therefore want that the House should urgently hold a discussion on this issue and the Government should openly say that there is no scarcity of wheats and if there is any, efforts are on to meet the same. I want to make a special mention about Fair Price Shops. The Government should immediately release wheat stocks for these shops. I was surprised to hear that only 47 lakh tons is being lifted against the allotment of 60 lakh tons by the Delhi state which will ultimately result into rise in price of wheat. I want that the State Governments should be asked to give

explanations as to why they did not lift their respective stocks. It is a matter of grave concern. As the Minister has told that State Governments are not lifting the full quantity of the stock allotted to them. This is a reason responsible for the rise in the wheat price. I want that this should be discussed in the House...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please sit down. I have called the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to speak.

(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANT JENA) : The Government has already given a statement and on this matter, the Leader of Opposition has sought a discussion. The Government is prepared for that...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Pal, be seated. Let us hear him. Mr. Acharia, be seated.

SHRI SRIKANT JENA : We can give a discussion on food situation with special emphasis on shortage of wheat. There is absolutely no problem. We can fix up a time and have a discussion on that.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let us stop the matter here.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please hear me. Atal ji has already proposed to have a discussion on this matter.

[Translation]

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, you have just allowed me to speak...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Everybody will be standing up and there will be no end to it. Now, please be seated.

Now, the issue is, an unusually lengthy statement was read out by the hon. Minister and there was lot of restlessness from various sections of the House.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let me conclude. The Government is also prepared to have a discussion on this subject. So, let us conclude this matter. According to the rules of the House, a discussion is not taken up on the statement. We will have a full-fledged discussion on this issue after fixing up a time. Therefore, we will go to the next item.

[Translation]

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : Chairman, Sir, while replying the discussion raised by me the previous week, the Hon'ble Minister has given assurance that the enquiry would be held within a week. In this regard, I would like to urge that while holding an enquiry, this aspect should also be enquired into as to why out of the stock of wheat lying at various stations in Rajasthan 21,000 bag of wheat were supplied to a single trader and this trader exported this wheat after the month of June...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : No. I will not allow you to seek any clarification. It is already decided that we will have a discussion. Mr. Joshi, please be seated.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : This is Zero Hour.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : Chairman Sir. This is a very important question. Discussion on this issue should start right now. Wheat is not available. Bullets are being fired. People are being killed. The Government is prepared for a debate. We are prepared for the debate. Then, what is the problem? This discussions should be initiated at this moment itself. What else can be more important and a issue of concern for this Home? We are public representatives. People are being killed. People are being shot. They are dying of starvation. Are you going to let loose food riots in this Country? Would you allow food riots to occur on this country? This debate should be held right now, today itself. What is the problem in it?

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let the Govt. react to it.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : Chairman Sir, the opposition party has made a demand that after the Minister's reply, a number of supplementary question's arise and there should be a discussion on food or wheat problem in the country. The Minister of Parliamentary Affairs has stated that the Govt. has no objection thereto. But, the discussion in the House is held under certain rules. It may be under an Adjournment Motion, under rule 184, rule 193 or Calling Attention Motion. Such discussions are usually held under these rules. This should be decided in the Business Advisory Committee as to under which rule the discussion should be held. We are prepared for that. We feel that after the reply by the Minister, discussion is held under rule 193. The Govt. has no objection if the discussion is held under the rule 193. You can old food problem or wheat problem to this discussion. The Govt. has no objection. The discussion can be taken in the Business Advisory Committee ... (Interruptions)

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : This House respects the feeling of the people and is meant to obviate the problem and difficulties being faced by the people. Therefore the discussions should be started right now suspending the rules in this regard... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Today, the meeting of the Bussimen Advisory Committee is going to be held at 4.15 P.M.

(Interruptions)

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : B.A.C. meeting is to be held in the evening. By that time in India ... (Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Why we are not called to the meeting?

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI : You suspend all the rules and start discussion. After all the rules are meant for soothing the problem are difficulties big faced by the people... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, no, this is not allowed.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : The Statement give by the Minister can satisfy the Minister, but it will neither satisfy the members nor the people. Our leaders have demanded immediate discussion on this issue suspending all the rule and practices. Our party had demanded that the using should be debated today, right now. The statement given in the House is more about self praise and less about the issue of wheat ... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : If we do not allow her to speak, then they will say that that we have no regards for the women... (Interruptions)

SHRI VIJAY GOEL : Mr. Chairman, Sir, at least I should be allowed to speak as I have tabled the notice for this discussion on the issue.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN (SHRI P.M. SAYEED) : It has already been listed. I am going accordingly. It is not that I have decided about it at this moment.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Don't do it.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is Zero Hour. Now, Shri Veerabhardram Thammineni.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have called Shri Thammineni.

(Interruptions)

SHRI VEERABHADRAM THAMMINENI (Khammam) : Sir, I am speaking... (Interruptions) They are disturbing me. How can I speak when disturbance is going on?

[Translation]

*SHRI THAMMINENI VEERABHADRAM (Khammam) : Hon. Chairman, Sir, we are going to adjourn for lunch. All of us are hungry. But when we go for lunch, while having lunch, we should not forget one important point. When 94 crores of people in the country

* Translation of the speech originally delivered in Telugu.